
Peace Bridges

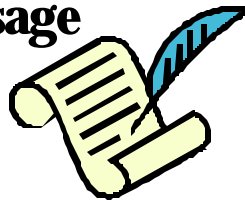


The Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Peace Corps Association

October 2004

President's Message

PAPCA Regroups



Bill Kulina
Friends,

The status of PAPCA has vastly improved. I received several responses of support to the letter I sent to members earlier this summer. Members want PAPCA to continue having social, volunteer and educational events. Several new leaders emerged. PAPCA has a largely new board, who bring with it new ideas and new vitality. Several changes will be happening within PAPCA, many of which are mentioned in this newsletter.

One exciting change is a new website, which I encourage you to view at your first convenience. It can be found at www.geocities.com/pittsburghrpcv More photos and information can be added to the site. You can now use YahooGroups to invite other PAPCA members to various

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 President's Message, Habitat for Humanity
- 2 RPCV Book Review; December Potluck
- 3 Calendar of Upcoming Events; Peace Corps Day
- 4 New Website, PAPCA Board Member Contact Info
- 5 Calendar of Events; Global Educators, "Lucky Day"
- 7 2005 Calendar Information; Join NPCA
- 8 Global Links Update, Request for Email Addresses

Habitat for Humanity

Fact Sheet

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from our country and around the world. Founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Habitat has built more than 160,000 houses worldwide.

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and/or renovates simple decent houses with the help of the homeowner (partner) families. Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit, financed with affordable, no-interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments go into a revolving fund that is used to build more houses. The local affiliate (Central Westmoreland Habitat for Humanity) will complete construction of its eighth house in the fall of 2004.

Every day of the year, somewhere in the world, Habitat for Humanity International builds more than 50 houses. That's more than 18,000 annually with one house built every 26 minutes.

Old dilapidated houses change to modest but good solid houses. New houses are built on formerly vacant land. Renters become homeowners. Despondency and a sense of hopelessness give way to rejoicing and buoyant hope. Instability in families is transformed into rock-solid stability. Poor performance or failure in work or school change to promotions and success. All because these good people have found a simple, decent place to stand which gives them the chance to move

continued on page 3

area events. This feature could greatly increase social functions, especially for those members who reside hours away from Pittsburgh. You are encouraged to use the site to increase interaction about events and to network amongst ourselves for professional and social purposes. Please contact Valerie Hopkins for more details on this exciting new feature.

Janet Arnold has taken over the newsletter. She is working with Valerie on getting future additions of the newsletter online. This would not only make the newsletter timelier but would be at less cost for PAPCA and less trees being cut. Of course, if you would prefer a hard copy of the newsletter sent to you, Janet will be happy to oblige.

Stories, articles, job leads and more can be sent to Janet for future newsletters.

Bob Goetschkes has taken over coordinating Peace Corps Week. He is seeking volunteer speakers as well as teachers who would want an RPCV speaking to their class. Always one of my favorite events, seeing the bright eyes and hearing the many questions of the students makes me certain that I am bringing the world back home.

Some social and volunteer activities will continue. New activities will arise. Please review the newsletter for details. As always, PAPCA welcomes your input and participation. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event.

Peace,
Bill

✍ **December Potluck Dinner** ✍

Love the holiday Potluck? Wondering who will be hosting it this year? Well, so are we!

The annual potluck is a PAPCA tradition that we hope will continue in 2004.

If anyone is interested in having the PAPCA group for the December Potluck, please contact Janet Arnold at hopemoira@aol.com or 412-421-3943.

Beyond Siberia

RPCV Readings and Writing

Review by John McCafferty, RPCV-Russia, 1996-98

Sharon Dirlam's memoirs of Peace Corps life in the Russian Far East will bring it all back to you: volunteer life in a country that seems much farther away than just a dozen or so time zones east or west from the U.S.

We in the fourth PC group to serve in Russia lived there for two LONG years, standing out in our Peace Corps Grunge clothing, struggling with a seemingly impossible language, and making friends with some truly wonderful people. A stylish writer, Dirlam fully captures this unusual and absorbing panorama.

Beyond Siberia is an important book in that it is one of literally a handful written about the Russian Far East (RFE), the eastern third of Russia that stretches from Lake Baikal and Siberia to the Pacific Ocean. There are only two fairly large cities, Khabarovsk, on the Amur River, and Vladivostok, a major Russian port city in the southeast. There isn't much going on north of these cities – a harsh land best known as the site of the Soviet gulag system. Elsewhere lie quiet, small communities and farms that are basically Nowhere.

Dirlam has written very effectively (she is a pro, a journalist and language teacher) about the total experience of living and working in the RFE. She tells about the folkways of the locals and some of the more printable antics of the volunteers, along with the amusing – if sometimes stressful – problem of being confined with one's spouse in a concrete box of an apartment.

While it's not a kiss-and-tell book or a racy sex romp like Paul Theroux's history in Africa, "Beyond Siberia" is a book that rings true. It is touching at times, funny, and valuable for anyone with an interest in either Russia or the Peace Corps.

Dirlam's co-volunteers are delighted by the book. What a time they had!

Beyond Siberia is available on-line at Powells.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GLOBAL LINKS

4809 PENN AVE. ON THE SECOND FLOOR (SEE ARTICLE)

OCTOBER 30, NOV. 20 FROM 9:30-NOON

See article on page 8 for information regarding Global Links.

SOCIAL DINING

**OLD EUROPE, 1211 E. CARSON ST, SOUTH SIDE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Join fellow PAPCA members for a night of Eastern European Cuisine. Please contact Valerie at 412-665-8549 or pittsburghrvcv@yahoo.com if you intend to go.

MORNING BIKE RIDE

**OHIO PYLE (MEET AT TRAIN STATION)
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 AT 10:00AM**

Outdoors enthusiasts and couch potatoes alike can enjoy the leisurely ride from Ohio Pyle to Confluence and back. Flat terrain, paved trail, approximately 22 mi. Bike rentals available. Bring the family. Rain date – Oct 30.

SOCIAL DINING

UDIPI CAFÉ 412-373-5581

4141 OLD WILLIAM PENN HIGHWAY, MONROEVILLE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6 AT 7:00

Join fellow PAPCA members for an evening of Indian Cuisine. At night the turnoff for Old William Penn Highway from Rodi Road is not well marked; follow signs for the SV Temple but once en route on the windy road, watch for the highly visible concrete plant. The Udupi Café is adjacent. Please contact Janet at hopemoira@yahoo.com or 412-421-3943 by Thursday, Nov. 4 if you think you'll be joining us so we can give the restaurant a head count.

NEXT BOARD MEETING – EVERYONE IS INVITED

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 4 AT 6:30
PANERA ON BLVD OF THE ALLIES**

SEE WEBSITE FOR UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS.

forward.”

Habitat is not a giveaway program. In addition to down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hundreds of hours of their own labor, “sweat equity”, into building their house and the houses of others.

The selection process has families in need of decent shelter applying to local habitat affiliates. A family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their willingness to repay the no-interest loan.

Habitat does not accept government funds for the construction of new houses or for the renovation or repair of existing houses. The majority of our funding comes from individual donors, churches, corporations, foundations, and colleges.

Our founder Millard Fuller sums up the concept of Habitat by saying, “All across the land, transformations are happening. The names of the people change and the towns and cities are different, but the stories are the same.

Peace Corps Day

Bob Goetschkes

All PAPCA members, please consider doing your part to achieve the Peace Corp's Third Goal: Sharing your international experiences with the public.

School teachers are particularly keen to have you speak about the Peace Corps to their foreign language classes, but, really, anything goes. One option you may consider is allowing a local school to display your memorabilia in a secure showcase. Teachers could then walk students to the display case and discuss what they are looking at.

I'd be happy to coordinate with whatever school you had in mind. I can be reached at (724) 853-9797 or rgoetschkes@norwinsd.org

Check out the new PAPCA Website!

We have updated our website and changed our site address to: www.geocities.com/pittsburghrpcv

New Features of the website include:

- ? Postings of current PAPCA events
- ? Apply/Update your Membership Information online
- ? Find out how to order RPCV calendars
- ? Notices Board where you can post job announcements, garage sales, events or other items that might be of interest of PAPCA members
- ? *Where in the World have our RPCVs been?* section which spotlights our returned volunteers
- ? Any photos from our RPCVs (which will be posted all over the website)

We are looking for photos, stories and other information about our RPCVs for our ***Where in the world have our RPCVs been?*** section on the website. For each RPCV, we will include the following information:

- ? Name
- ? Country of Service
- ? Years of Service
- ? Assignment
- ? Host Country language learned:
- ? Favorite Host Country Food:
- ? A favorite experience: This section can be as short as a couple sentences or as long as a couple paragraphs.
- ? Photo: We would prefer a picture of you in your host country native dress.

If you would like to be added, please send the above information to Valerie Hopkins at pittsburghrpcv@yahoo.com or at the physical address below:

5011 Friendship Avenue, Apt. A
Pittsburgh, PA 15224

For Photos:

Photos can be submitted online at pittsburghrpcv@yahoo.com. Acceptable digital formats include: .jpg, .gif, .bmp. If you are sending Valerie hard copies of your photos, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope so that your photos may be returned to you.

Valerie also welcomes any suggestions from members regarding content for the PAPCA website. You can email her at the above email address.

Current PAPCA Officers

President:	Bill Kulina billkulina@yahoo.com 412-420-4006
Vice-President:	Don Bayla tuandon@hotmail.com 412-257-2799
Treasurer: & Newsletter	Janet Arnold hopemoira@yahoo.com 412-421-3943
Membership:	Mary Anne Crecelius kaele71@juno.com 412-363-0962
Community Service:	Kay Jennings JenningsKD@upmc.edu
Web page:	Valerie Hopkins pittsburghrpcv@yahoo.com 412-665-8549
Peace Corps Day:	Bob Goetskes waiialae@comcast.net (724) 853-9797

Other Goings-On and Useful Links

- ✍ Peace Corps calendars now available. See Page 7.
- ✍ Habitat for humanity
www.centralwestmorelandhfh.org Contact Ed Ford at 724-863-1970 to volunteer or for more information.
- ✍ Want to paint your house or always up for a new project? Greg is looking for a few good DIYers. If you are interested in swapping sweat equity, Greg is in the process of organizing a type of co-op
- ✍ Pumpkin Patch volunteers needed. Patch open Sept 28-Oct 31, 10:00 am – dark. Children’s activities, fall produce for sale. For more information, contact Bob Goetskes at waiatae@comcast.net or (724) 861-3015.

KNOW OF ANY OUTSTANDING GLOBAL EDUCATORS OR PEACE EDUCATORS?

This fall, the NPCA's Global TeachNet Program will once again be accepting nominations for its two awards for K-12 school-based educators: Global Educator Awards and Peace Educator Awards. So as the school year gets under way, spend some time thinking of teachers you know who deserve recognition for their great efforts in global education and peace education!

Global Educator and Peace Educator Award winners receive a monetary award and national recognition. Their global and peace education lesson plans are featured in the Global TeachNet website and newsletter.

We will accept nominations from all interested parties, including parents, students, administrators, and community members. We also accept self-nominations. Updated nomination materials and instructions are available on our website at <http://www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=55>.

Nominations must be postmarked by October 18, 2004.

‘LUCKY DAY’

A psychiatrist receives the Sargent Shriver Award for serving more than 3,000 AIDS orphans in Malawi

by Erica Burman

Like many Peace Corps stories, this one—about how a child psychiatrist from Canan-daigua, New York started providing village-level services for Malawi’s AIDS orphans—began with a chance encounter, the offer of a lift.

Some years ago, Kevin Denny, who had served as a tuberculosis control volunteer there in 1964 to 1966, was driving a rental car near the western shore of Lake Malawi. Since ending his Peace Corps work, Denny had returned often and for many reasons: anthropological research for a Masters degree, medical school rotation at Malindi Mission Hospital. This time, as he rounded a bend in the road, he saw a couple standing by the side of the road, clutching some seedlings. Only a week before he had met the man, Chakunja Sibale, the very capable chief clinical officer at Malindi Mission Hospital. So he stopped to offer a ride.

Sibale’s fiancée, Faith, burst out, “This is such a lucky day for us!” They were headed home, and told Denny they were also trying to examine a 10-acre site they hoped to buy on the southern tip of the lake. Sibale bought the land, the three began discussing something to do to serve the people of Malawi. That was 1991. Thirteen years later, Denny, Sibale and Sibale’s wife, Faith, who is a nurse, have created the Malawi Children’s Village, a community-based program serving the needs of more than 3,200 children in 37 villages whose mothers and fathers died of AIDS. Sibale is project site director and Denny serves as board president. In 2002, the Sibales received the NPCA’s Award for Outstanding Work by a Host Country National for their efforts and Malawi’s Ministry of Children’s Affairs has recently recognized the project as a national model for helping AIDS orphans. Children’s Village staff are now training other community leaders to develop orphan care programs and advise similar grassroots groups in Tanzania and Zambia.

At its 25th-year national conference in Chicago on August 6, the NPCA will give its coveted Sargent Shriver Award

for Outstanding Humanitarian Service to Denny for his continued guidance and support of the project.

Malawi Children's Village is operated by nine committed Malawians, but crucial leadership and support has come through Denny's ability to mobilize returned Peace Corps volunteers and the Friends of Malawi network. Since 1995, more than 600 returned Peace Corps volunteers have provided financial and moral support, and 150 have gone to Malawi to volunteer with the project. In some cases, volunteers were following in their parent's Peace Corps footsteps. Denny understands their motives. "I think most returned Peace Corps volunteers think 'Gee, I don't know that I did much, but I had a great experience,'" he says. "So it's wonderful to feel passionate about giving back, to reconnect with 100 similarly-minded old friends and in the process make hundreds of new friends."

But Denny gives the credit to Malawi. "This project operates without any day-to-day help from us in the States," he says. "It is the Malawian's project, which depends upon their total and enduring commitment. Our role is to support that team financially and personally to keep up their constant efforts." A management consultant working on similar programs in Malawi said the competition in communities suffering such great need and scarce opportunities made the selection of local staff critical to the success of Malawi Children's Village. Julia Demichelis—who served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana from 1982 to 1984 and won the 1999 Shriver Award for her conflict resolution work in the post-war Balkans—says the local staff of the orphan's village program "is a magnificent show of Kevin's talent in having found Malawians who can lead and respond to a community."

The orphans' village began as a way to deal with the grave and overwhelming consequences of a national AIDS epidemic that has orphaned more than 800,000 children. The project evolved from a western model of an orphanage where children too weak to be cared for in the villages could receive professional medical attention around the clock. Sibale and Denny toured the villages to explain their concept to local chiefs. One gaunt 80-year-old chief listened as Denny described their good intentions and then rejected them.

"Young man," the chief replied, "people have been coming to my door with promises twice a year for 30 years. Why should

I get excited about you?"

Chastened by their reception, Denny and Sibale modified their ideas until they had a concept appropriate to rural Africa: provide direct material support to the extended family—particularly the over-burdened grandparents who often end up as the caregivers. Eventually, buildings were built on Sibale's land: a small children's nutritional rehabilitation center for gravely ill children; a walk-in clinic for orphans, caretakers and village volunteers; a community library which sits above a maize storage vault; staff offices and a new vocational training center to give orphans training in carpentry, masonry, auto mechanics, irrigation and pump repair, tailoring, furniture-making and electrical systems.

But to the greatest extent possible, Malawi Children's Village serves through outreach, taking its services to the villages where the orphans live with relatives. Local participation is essential to the success of Malawi Children's Village: Traditional leaders nominate two volunteers in each community who identify orphans in their villages. Each coordinator is given training, a uniform and a bicycle and works with Malawi Children's Village to see that orphans and their caregivers receive food, clothes, blankets, medical care and school supplies.

Encouraged by the knowledge that their neighbors were receiving material help as they shouldered the burden of caring for the orphans, other family members offered to help. Denny says that while the numbers of AIDS orphans has increased, more village members have stepped forward to help: in eight years, the average number of orphans per home has dropped from 6.3 children to 1.9.

The care-giving families can also count on Malawi Children's Village in drought or flood conditions. Over a five-year period, Malawi Children's Village bought 100,000 pounds of maize on the open market and distributed it to 1,900 families caring for orphans. Farmers repay the cost of the maize by donating a portion of their harvest to a reserve for future difficulties. To widen the safety net, they have initiated six community development projects in which villages work collectively to build and maintain irrigation projects for farming and helped 300 farmers buy treadle pumps.

Services for the orphans have expanded beyond their immediate survival needs: They have sponsored scholarships for 107 orphans now in secondary schools. Primary school attendance has risen 50 percent in a country where the national average is 22 percent. This year, four orphans will attend colleges in Malawi, each promising to return to serve his community.

"I've always been interested in what makes healthy, happy adults," Denny says. "By providing opportunities and engendering worth in these orphans, we are taking care of their psychological needs in a concrete way so that they can be hopeful and feel responsible for their communities."

Erica Burman is NPCA news director and served in Gambia from 1987 to 1989. Contributions to the project can be mailed to Garry Prime, Treasurer, Malawi Children's Village, 20 Pond Park Road, Hingham, Massachusetts 02043.

(Article taken from NPCA Web site)

CALENDARS: Once again, PAPCA is selling the great calendar put together each year by the Madison, WI, RPCV group. Get the 2005 calendar for yourself. Then -- think big -- get additional calendars for friends, family, clients, colleagues, your boss, your employees--anyone, in fact, that you want (or need) to give a gift to in the next few months. They're colorful. They're packed full of interesting date trivia and information about the dozen PC countries that are featured each year. They bring back fond memories for RPCVs. They bring the world back home for those who weren't as lucky as we were to serve in these countries. And, very important, the calendars raise money for good causes and worthy organizations, like PAPCA, the NPCA, and the Madison, Wisconsin, RPCV group.

Now, how do you actually get your calendars? First, you can come to PAPCA events and find the calendars there. Or you can send your check (see prices below) made out to PAPCA to Valerie Hopkins at 5011 Friendship Ave. Apt. A, Pittsburgh, PA 15224. Please include your name, address, phone number, and number of calendars desired. You can get an order form to print and mail off the Web. Valerie can be contacted at 412-665-8549 with questions.

Calendars are \$11 for the first, two for \$20, \$9 each for three or more. Include \$2 for postage and handling for the first calendar and \$.50 for each additional one. Make your check payable to PAPCA.

Join NPCA

Please fill in the following information:

Name 1: _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Address: _____

Country of Service _____ Years _____ E-mail _____

Name 2: _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Address: _____

Country of Service _____ Years _____ E-mail _____

If you would like to become a member of the National Peace Corps Association and PAPCA, indicate the level below, make out a check to NPCA, and mail your check and this form in an envelope to PAPCA, 3410 Beechwood Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15217. We think that this is a great idea. You provide the support for the National Association and for PAPCA and receive a variety of benefits in return.

_____ \$50 Individual _____ \$65 Family

GLOBAL LINKS SERVICE PROJECT

Global Links is an organization that collects surplus medical supplies from U.S. hospitals and sends them to public hospitals that serve the poor in Latin America and the Caribbean. It also sends suture kits (used to close wounds or surgical incisions) to hospitals throughout the world.

For the past few years PAPCA has been helping to sort and box these supplies so that they are ready for shipment. Please join us for a pleasant time of sorting, chatting, counting, eating donuts, boxing, and drinking coffee.

We generally work on the last Saturday of each month from 9:30 to noon. Dates for the rest of the year are **September 25, October 30, and November 20** (no December time). Global links is located at 4809 Penn Avenue on the second floor in Pittsburgh 15224 (Garfield area near the Allegheny Cemetery and former St. Francis Hospital). Their phone number is 412-361-3424. There is a parking lot next to the building.

Each month the Global Links coordinator prepares projects for us based on the number of PAPCA volunteers expected. In order to let her know how many of us to expect, Kay Jennings sends out an e-mail to people who have indicated an interest in Global Links about a week before the session. To be included in this e-mail list, please e-mail Kay at jenningskd@upmc.edu. It is a fun time – both relaxing and productive. Hope that you can join us some time.

Help PAPCA Out!

If you have email and are not already on our email list, we would like to add you. Time and money constraints mean that Peace Bridges, the PAPCA newsletter, only goes out four times a year. To keep people up to date in between newsletters, we send weekly email updates to a large percentage of our mailing list. It's a great, inexpensive way to keep our membership informed.

If you are not already on our list but would like to be, please send your name and email address to kaele71@juno.com. If you have any questions, please send your inquiries to that address.